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THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY FACING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS:

# Mandatory Voting in Local Government Elections

2022

**Mandatory Voting in Local Government:**
**Final Version 2022**

This report has been prepared by participants of the Emerging Leaders Program, facilitated by Local Government Professionals SA in association with the University of South Australia.

The contents are for educational purposes only and should not be taken to express the political views of the program, or any of its participants.

We would like to acknowledge and thank council staff, CEOs and everyone else who responded to the online survey.

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Front cover image credit: Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA)

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# Executive Summary

This report seeks to answer the question: 'What is the biggest opportunity facing Local Government in South Australia in the next 5 years?'

To answer this, the authors of this report considered where Local Government (LG) in South Australia differs to LG in other States. A glaringly obvious difference was mandatory voting.

Currently, South Australia and Western Australia are the only States in which voting in LG elections is not compulsory. The associated voter turnout figures provide an insightful comparison. In Victoria, where voting is mandatory, more than 80% of eligible people turnout to vote in LG elections (Carey, 2020). In South Australia, the voter turnout figure is an alarmingly low 33%.

This raises concern about the legitimacy of council elections in South Australia and whether the candidates being elected can adequately represent their community when they are being elected, at times, on a handful of votes.

This report recommends that making voting in LG elections mandatory, is the greatest opportunity facing the sector in the next 5 years.

To reach this conclusion, the authors examined the literature around compulsory voting, as this report is certainly not the first time the idea has been mooted.

The literature is compelling. The Electoral Commission of South Australia (ECSA), shows just 37% of the population is aware that a LG election is on this year (2022). All too often it is minority groups who are unaware of their right to vote, which means their views go unheard and unrepresented.

The Local Government Association of SA (LGA) has continued to monitor community attitudes to the introduction of compulsory voting since 1985. There have been numerous reports, studies and recommendations into the issue with varying results, but to date there has been no move towards reform.

As part of the research into this report, an online survey was sent to each of the Emerging Leaders Program participants, with the request to forward it onto their Elected Members and executive staff. Unfortunately, just 51 people completed the survey so it cannot be used as a true representation of views. However, it is interesting to note that more than half of the respondents were in favour of compulsory voting.

Ultimately, this report suggests that LG in South Australia has an opportunity to lead the way, by introducing not just mandatory voting but also online voting, which would raise the profile of the sector, encourage younger generations to vote and improve inclusivity.

# Introduction

The foundation of any democracy is fair and transparent elections that offer a mechanism for community members to express and enact their values (OHCHR, 2022). But to accurately gauge representation of community priorities, a material percentage of voters from the relevant population is necessary. While voting is mandatory at the federal and state levels of government, in South Australia voting is not mandatory in Local Government (LG) elections.

As a result, voter turnout in local government elections is significantly lower compared to other jurisdictions, with less than one-third of eligible electors casting a vote (Electoral Commission of South Australia, 2022). A survey conducted as part of this project shows a preference for mandatory voting in LG elections from both Elected Members and council executive staff.

This report explores the impact mandatory voting would have on local government in South Australia, and considers whether it could prove a significant opportunity, or a costly burden. This is achieved by first examining the history of voting in LG elections and discussing voting discrepancies, not just in the different tiers of government, but across the states and territories.

In Victoria, where voting in Local Government elections is compulsory, the average voter turnout in the 2020 elections was over 81% (Carey, 2020).

There are several arguments for and against implementing compulsory voting in elections. Parallels can be drawn between the federal and state tiers of government, where the arguments to maintain compulsory voting include the legitimacy of votes, costs and resourcing and politicising LG.

This project also considers what efforts, if any, have previously been made to introduce mandatory voting in South Australia and explores what alternatives there are to increase voter turnout, if compulsory voting is not the solution.

In SA voter turnout for LG elections is less than

# 33%

# Statistics and Literature Review

## The Statistics

The Electoral Commission of South Australia (ECSA) regulates State and LG (council) elections in SA. Periodic council elections are run every four years. Voter turnout in LG elections is significantly lower compared to other jurisdictions, with less than one-third of eligible electors casting a vote (based on 33% average voter engagement in the 2014 and 2018 periodic elections, see Annexure 2).

ECSA (2022) data indicates only 37% of the population in South Australia is aware there is an LG election in 2022 (36% in metropolitan areas, and 41% in the regions). When asked whether they had previously voted in LG elections, only 59% indicated they had (59% in metropolitan areas, and 60% in the regions).

People indicated the key barriers to voting were:

1. People – I don't know who to vote for (candidate information is a significant barrier).

2. Point – I don't really care, and nothing will change anyway.

3. Process – It's too easy to miss the mailer and actually the whole election (young people are less engaged with postal mail).

## Eligibility to Vote

Because of the complex relationship between the House of Assembly Roll (State) and the Council Supplementary Roll (Local), as well as ward structures (meaning depending on the number of wards in a given council, there may be multiple elections occurring simultaneously in each council area) many members of the public are confused about their eligibility to vote, even if they are aware an election is occurring (see Annexure 1).

## Demographic of Voters

Statistically, the demographics that are under-represented in voter turnout also tend to be minorities, including:

- Women
- CALD groups
- First Nation Australians
- Young people
- People with a disability
- Voters <60 years old
- Those who are not ratepayers but eligible to vote
- First time voters

The concern with these statistics is that the ECSA data reflects a direct correlation between under representation in voting and representation on the elected council (candidates).

Based on data collected from the 2014 and 2018 periodic elections, women make up only 32.4% of Elected Councillors and only 28.0% of Mayors in SA (see Annexures 5 and 7). Furthermore, only 27.5% of all Elected Councillors in SA are under the age of 45, and only 18.6% of Mayors (see Annexures 4 and 6).

When minorities are not represented on the elected body, their views and preferences are less likely to be considered in strategic decisions. Likewise, an electoral body which is not diverse or balanced is inherently at risk of a narrow scope of representation in decision making.

## Investigations into introducing Mandatory Voting in SA

Since 1985, the Local Government Association of SA (LGA) has continued to monitor community attitudes to the introduction of compulsory voting in LG elections. Eight independently conducted surveys over the past 22 years, commissioned by the LGA, have consistently recorded a majority in favour of maintaining voluntary voting. In recent years (since 2001) the percentage has been at or about 66% of those surveyed (Government of SA, 2007).

A survey of 2006 LG candidates found some support for the introduction of compulsory voting, but this was often couched in terms of 'a last resort' (Jaensch, 2007). While research conducted by the LGA in December 2006 to identify attitudes towards LG elections of residents in metropolitan Adelaide and regional South Australia, found that 67% had not voted in an election (Wagstaff, 2007).

In 2007, the Minister for State/Local Government Relations and the President of the LGA commissioned Margaret Wagstaff to undertake an Independent Review of LG elections. The report found there was still support for compulsory voting (44.4% of those surveyed) however, it was not a majority (Wagstaff, 2007).

In 2013, an Independent Review, headed by former Local Government Minister Greg Crafter, recommended compulsory voting to be introduced for all council elections to boost the credibility of LG. However, at the LGA's annual general meeting in October 2013, councils voted against compulsory voting, while regular LGA public polling on the issue found 'roughly two thirds of people are opposed to compulsory voting for council elections' (Siebert, 2014).

*'Enforcing compulsory voting in a postal voting system is difficult and resource intensive.'*

In 2014, *The Advertiser* conducted a survey asking the SA population: 'Should voting be made compulsory for Local Government?' 36.8% said Yes and 63.2% said No (The Advertiser, 2014).

The 2019 discussion paper headed by the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure on reforming LG in South Australia noted that '… it is also not proposed to move to compulsory voting…" Enforcing compulsory voting in a postal voting system is difficult and resource intensive. This may be a reform best explored at a time when online voting is possible (Government of SA, 2019).

# Interstate Models

The care and protection of LG sits with the responsibility of the states; it is state legislature that dictates the rules and regulations concerning mandatory voting for LG elections. However, the rules that regulate the governance of LG elections and its voting franchise differ from state to state (and is further distinguished between respective capital city councils).

Whilst it is noted that Queensland (Government of QLD, 2022), Victoria (Vic.gov.au, 2022) and New South Wales (Nicholls, 2017) all exercise legislative requirements imposing mandatory voting for their LG elections, the voting franchise is substantially different between each state.

While most states have adopted a property-based voting franchise, there are significant distinctions between corporation-based voting entitlements and how they interact with multiple entitlements against one franchise (for property owners who own various properties or are directors of corporations with the one municipality).

There are some common consistencies between each state with respect to LG voting entitlements:

- There is a legislative mechanism that imposes a position and regulates mandatory/optional voting within LG.

- Having an enrolment status against the Commonwealth/State electoral roll within an LG municipality will automatically entitle a person to have a voting franchise;

- Owning or occupying property in an LG rateable area will entitle the owner or occupier to exercise a voting franchise within that area (irrespective of whether the person is an occupier);

- Where the owner or occupier is a body corporate, the legislation will generally provide a process to where a natural person can vote on the corporations' behalf;

- Where the owner or occupier owns or lives within multiple properties within the municipality, the legislation will provide guidance on statutory limits for the amount of voting franchise available to a natural person;

- Where the owner or occupier of a rateable property resides in the same municipality (as their rental property), there will be a statutory limitation allocated against that voting franchise; and

- There are differentiations between various municipalities and their legislature, with respect to automatic enrolment on a voters' role, or if a manual enrolment period is required at the start of each election.

The below table details the various voting entitlements against the whole of percentage voting turnout as seen in the last general election.

| | Qld | Vic | Tas | NSW | SA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Resident in the relevant area and entitled to vote at state/ federal elections | Yes | Yes | Yes (and for some residents who may not meet state/federal) | Yes | Yes (and for some residents who may not meet state/federal criteria) |
| Votes for resident ratepaying property owners or occupiers in the area (or representative thereof) | No | Yes | Yes (if a nominee of a property-owning corporation) | No may only be enrolled in their capacity as a resident | Yes (if a nominee of a property-owning corporation or group, but may only vote in one capacity) |
| Votes for nonresident ratepaying property owner or occupier in the area (or representative thereof) | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Votes for corporations | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Possibility of multiple voting entitlements (plurality) | No | Yes (possible) | Yes (possible) | Yes (possible) | Yes (possible) |
| Mandatory voting within legislature for local government | Yes | Yes | Not historically, but currently undergoing reform that has introduced mandatory voting[1] | Yes [2] | No |
| Statewide voting turnout at last general local government election (as an average percentage) | 77.71% | 81.4% | 52.81% | 79.7% | |

[1] R Chapman, J Power, R Wettenhall and J Halligan (eds), Local Government Systems of Australia (Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981) 705, 711 18
[2] Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) S286

In Queensland, the legislature clearly dictates that: 'Voting at Queensland LG elections is compulsory for electors' (Queensland, 2022)

In Victoria section 40(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* makes it compulsory for a person who is enrolled on the voters' roll as a resident under section 12 to vote at any election for their ward in which they ordinarily reside.

In Tasmania, Section 256 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (Tas) provides that at any given election a voter has no more than two votes. Currently, Tasmania has introduced mandatory voting for LG elections, which is likely to increase the voting turnout (Foletta, 2022).

In New South Wales, there is a requirement to vote based on an individual's identifiable franchise against various voting rolls. There are three rolls; the roll of non-resident owners of rateable land, the roll of occupiers and ratepaying lessees and the residential roll. Those persons listed on the residential roll must vote at a contested election unless provided with an exemption (Government of NSW, 2022).

# 81%

of eligible people turned out to vote in the last Victorian Local Government elections.
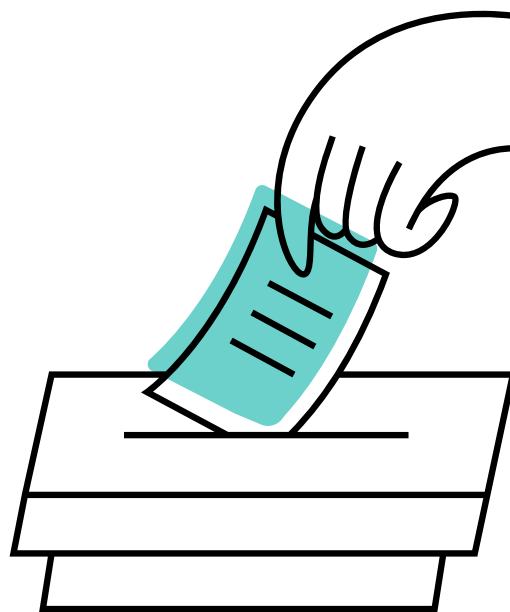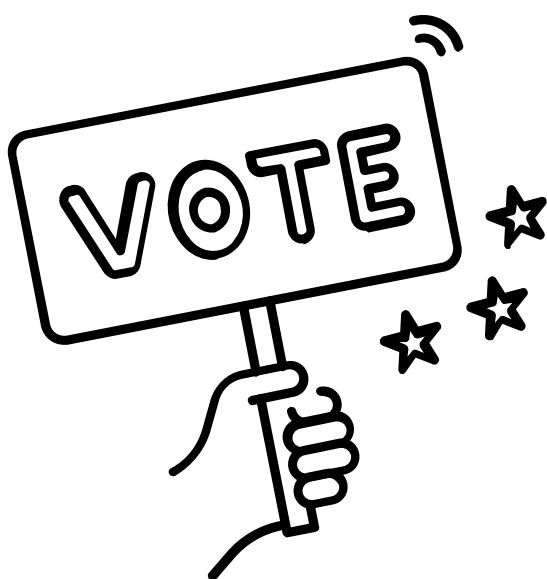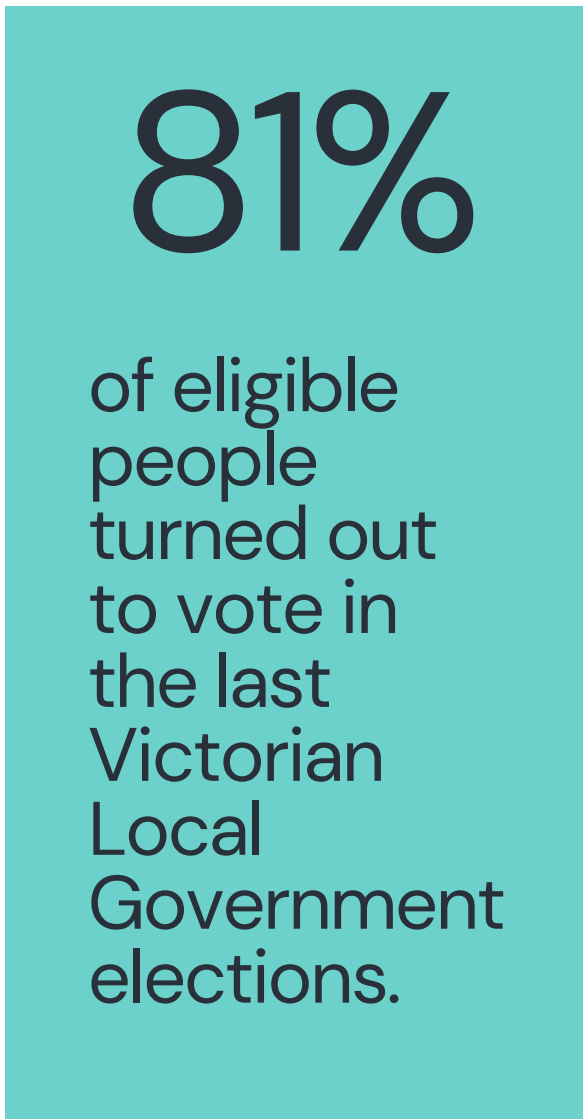
# Data Analysis

To better understand the current sentiment towards mandatory voting in South Australia, a short survey was sent out to Elected Members and council executive staff (see result extracts at Annexure 8). The decision was made not to send the survey to the general public, because the issue has been previously canvassed in LGA surveys and newspaper polls *(The Advertiser Sunday Mail, 2014).*

The response was somewhat limited in that only 51 people completed the survey. However the respondents were fairly evenly distributed, with 43% of responses from Elected Members and 56% from executive staff. It is important to also note that responses were from LG areas across South Australia, including both metropolitan and regional councils.

Overall, 61% of participants in the survey described the current system for LG elections as somewhat effective, 25% found it ineffective and only 14% described it as effective.

There were three key trends identified that influenced the respondents' view about the current system. These included the quality of Elected Members attracted and elected, low voter turnout and the current mechanisms in place for voting.

Almost 60% were in favour of making voting compulsory in LG elections. 17 executive members and 12 Elected Members were in favour of mandatory voting at an LG level.

Concerns around the impact of mandatory voting include:

- The risk of politicising LG;
- Cost; and
- The legitimacy of the current voting mechanism.

Feedback gathered in the survey raised concerns about the relevance of postal and in-person voting and supported a move towards an electronic system. Concerns were raised over voter fatigue due to State and Federal mandatory elections. Cost was regarded as the greatest disadvantage. This in particular could be an issue for smaller regional councils if it became an expectation that councils will incur the costs associated with the election process, such as staffing, advertising, postal, freight and operations.

Three key trends emerged from the benefits of compulsory voting. These included:

- Better representation of the community;
- Improving the standing of elected candidates; and
- Increasing awareness of the contribution of councils beyond rates, rubbish and roads.

Positive outcomes associated with benefits listed above included raising the profile of LG, improving awareness of local issues and increasing voter turnout.

All respondents suggested that it would be the role of the Electoral Commission of SA to conduct the elections and enforce penalties for voting non-compliance.

76% stated that ratepayers, renters and business owners should have the right to vote in LG elections. 14% believed only ratepayers should have the right.

A suggestion was made that non-citizens who live in the council area should also be able to vote as this could increase voter turnout if permanent residents and people on visas were also eligible to vote.

To increase voter turnout, two main suggestions were prevalent. The first was to change the mechanism to current voting systems by moving to electronic voting. This however raises concerns around cybersecurity and fraud. The second factor was there needs to be a stronger focus on publicity. Other suggestions included incentivising voting by means of reduced council rates or offering prizes.

It was suggested that there should be a limit on the number of elected members per council and they should also be more active in the community.

## Limitations of the Survey

It must be recognised that only a small sample size of executive staff and Elected Members completed the survey. This is somewhat disappointing as the authors of the report sent the survey link to all of the Emerging Leaders Program participants and asked them to forward it to both the Elected Members and the executive staff, which should have resulted in a much greater number of responses.

It is possible the low response rate is due to the imminence of the 2022 LG elections and current workloads did not allow for any additional time to complete the survey.

To better determine if voting in LG elections should be compulsory a larger sample size is required.

In addition, the timing of the survey, which as previously mentioned was sent (and in some cases completed) just prior to and during caretaker period, could have swayed opinions of those Elected Members who have chosen to no longer stand for council.

# 60%

of survey respondents were in favour of mandatory voting in Local Government elections.

# Discussion

## The Implications

There are several arguments for and against implementing compulsory voting in Local Government (LG) elections. Parallels can easily be drawn between the federal and state tiers of government, where the arguments to maintain compulsory voting include the following:

### Considering the Full Electorate

There is an argument that candidates must consider the total electorate in policy formulation and strategic decisions. Compulsory voting encourages policies and decisions which holistically address the spectrum of elector values, because all voters have to be appealed to by candidates in order to be elected.

### Legitimacy

Candidates elected by a compulsory vote more accurately reflect the will of the electorate. In a voluntary system, the turnout could (and does) vary significantly from council to council, from ward to ward, from candidate to candidate.

### Resource Implications

Candidates can concentrate their campaigning energies on issues rather than encouraging voters to attend a polling place, or complete a postal vote.

The counter argument then becomes that resources must be allocated for the enforcement of compulsory voting – meaning resource allocation is merely shifted from candidates to regulator.

### Partisan Advantage

Partisan advantage is possibly the most substantial argument for compulsory voting. Partisan advantage occurs when voters steadfastly support a particular issue or candidate, without logical or rational reasoning (for example, in support of a friend of family member). In Local Government elections this is of particular concern, where there is a material likelihood of a candidate receiving support from friends or family members who are eligible to vote in the council area.

## Arguments supporting Introduction of Mandatory Voting

There was a consistent trend in the arguments supporting the introduction of mandated voting across all spheres of research undertaken including:

- Consistency – aligning LG with the other two tiers of government, as well as the majority of states.
- Engagement – increased voter turnout and interest in the operation of LG leading to more engaged and informed communities.

- Resourcing – candidates and councillors can concentrate on policy issues and community outcomes, rather than encouraging people to vote in an election.
- Representation – the outcome of an election is a more legitimate and inclusive representation of the community's will.

## Identified Issues

While introducing compulsory voting would indeed solve many issues around ensuring a fair and equitable system of representation at the local tier of government, it is not without its issues or complexities.

The major issues identified include:

- Eligibility to vote with complex voting structures – because in LG elections eligibility is not merely determined by residential address, and voters could potentially have more than one election in which they are eligible to vote (as a result of the relationship between the House of Assembly Roll, Council Supplementary Roll, and ward structures) the facilitation and regulation of LG elections is currently overseen by ECSA, with support from 67 of the 68 SA councils (excluding Roxby Downs). This creates an extremely complex system, with numerous parties involved in the process (including council staff whose core business and expertise is not in elections specifically) creating significant potential for concern around validity of results.

- Availability of resources – while there is one federal government, and six states plus two territories, there are 68 councils in SA alone. Therefore, the resources required to implement and regulate compulsory voting in LG elections would be significant, on an already burdened system.

- Politicising LG elections – the concern that mandatory voting may lead to domination by pre-selected members of registered political parties using LG as a platform, rather than ratepayers seeking to represent the interests of their ward of council area without political bias.

- Resistance to voting – similar to other States, there is the potential for donkey votes and other forms of protest against mandated voting.

# Summary and Recommendations

Interstate analysis confirms that the introduction of mandatory voting increases voter turnout by not less than 20%. Given this is not an immaterial increase, it could be argued that mandatory voting would not address the issue considered in this report.

However, while introducing mandatory voting would indeed significantly increase voter turnout in LG elections, and would therefore also increase representation of minority voices in councils, it is perhaps not a reform that can happen in isolation.

The entire voting system for LG elections should be examined and the current, archaic system that leaves councils as an all too often forgotten anomaly when it comes to elections, needs to be replaced with a modern voting system that would raise the profile of the sector and therefore its candidates.

The argument that mandatory voting would politicise LG is largely redundant, with a recent article in *The Advertiser* revealing that currently one in three candidates standing in the LG elections for suburban councils belongs to a major political party (Jones, 2022).

The Electoral Commission has this year required all candidates to disclose their party affiliations as a matter of transparency ahead of polling day on November 12. Of the 18 greater Adelaide councils, 172 of the 560 candidates belong to political parties: 77 Labor, 67 Liberal, 4 Liberal Democrats, 19 Greens, 3 Animal Justice Party and 2 Family First. 11 candidates have cancelled their memberships within the past year (Jones, 2022).

Concerns around the cost of introducing compulsory voting could also be mitigated if the reform included a shift away from postal voting, or polling booths, and instead introducing electronic voting as a means of polling in local government elections.

As we do more of our business using a number of electronic mediums (from eftpos to electronic banking, ATMs, and online purchases) why should we not also vote electronically? This is consistent, and would align with, the Electoral Commission's current shift to using an online portal for candidate nominations, publication of candidate profiles, and lodging of disclosure returns from the 2022 election. It is further claimed that, if electronic voting was used, election results would be known much earlier than is presently the case and would be cheaper than the present arrangements.

## Advantages

- It would provide easy access to voting for those electors who live in remote locations and who have some difficulty getting to a polling place (including disabled voters and elderly).
- It would provide a service to electors to vote from home or at work during a time convenient to the elector.
- The application could be designed to minimise informal voting and include clear prompts to ensure eligibility requirements are met.
- The results would be electronically calculated.
- There would in time be a reduction in polling place staff, minimising resourcing burden on councils.
- Be produced in a range of languages and for sight and hearing impaired, attracting more voters

## Disadvantages

The security of the Internet as a vehicle for critical transactions such as voting in government elections is still an issue that has not been satisfactorily resolved.

The recent Optus cybersecurity breach where customers' driver's licence and Medicare numbers were stolen, along with other key identity items, highlights the risk involved in any storage of personal details online.

There is also potential for certain demographics of the population to struggle with an entirely online system, and would require a transition period where hard copy ballot voting could still be accommodated in person at councils or via post as an intermediate step.

## Recommendations

It is interesting to note that voter turnout in LG elections is significantly higher in many country and remote councils (ECSA, 2022). This is likely because community members see a direct correlation between their elected members and the town in which they reside, while in larger metropolitan councils, even the council name is in some occasions relatively obscure.

Based on the data analysed, the authors of this report recommend a three-pronged approach to reforming LG elections would be the most beneficial being: combining mandatory voting (1) with electronic voting (2) and greater visibility of council's direct positive impact on communities (3).

It is considered that this would achieve the desired objectives of the report subject, whilst also mitigating the identified potential issues with implementing mandatory voting. This opportunity is unique to SA at the current time, given the stage of electronic business, the Electoral Commissions' current updated processes, and the spotlight of the Local Government Act reform.

*'... voter turnout is significantly higher in many country and remote councils.'*
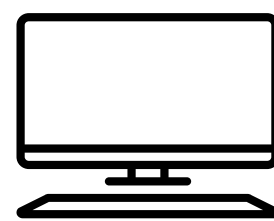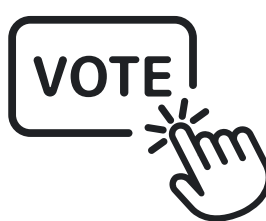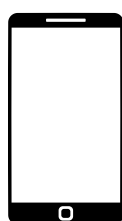
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# Appendices

Council enrolment data as at 25 February 2022

| Council | Number of councillors * | House of Assembly roll | Council roll | Total roll | Electors per councillor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adelaide | 11 | 13,476 | 19,781 | 33,257 | 3,023 |
| Adelaide Hills | 12 | 30,057 | 32 | 30,089 | 2,507 |
| Adelaide Plains | 9 | 6,578 | 42 | 6,620 | 736 |
| Alexandrina | 11 | 21,935 | 81 | 22,016 | 2,001 |
| Barossa | 11 | 18,438 | 97 | 18,535 | 1,685 |
| Barunga West | 9 | 1,978 | 20 | 1,998 | 222 |
| Berri Barmera | 8 | 7,479 | 4 | 7,483 | 935 |
| Burnside | 12 | 32,532 | 53 | 32,585 | 2,715 |
| Campbelltown | 10 | 37,079 | 40 | 37,119 | 3,712 |
| Ceduna | 8 | 2,062 | 28 | 2,090 | 261 |
| Charles Sturt | 16 | 89,982 | 109 | 90,091 | 5,631 |
| Clare & Gilbert Valleys | 9 | 6,752 | 27 | 6,779 | 753 |
| Cleve | 7 | 1,234 | 7 | 1,241 | 177 |
| Coober Pedy | 8 | 894 | 20 | 914 | 114 |
| Coorong | 9 | 3,830 | 26 | 3,856 | 428 |
| Copper Coast | 9 | 11,889 | 118 | 12,007 | 1,334 |
| Elliston | 8 | 663 | 29 | 692 | 87 |
| Flinders Ranges | 8 | 1,151 | 32 | 1,183 | 148 |
| Franklin Harbour | 6 | 906 | 8 | 914 | 152 |
| Gawler | 10 | 19,232 | 25 | 19,257 | 1,926 |
| Goyder | 7 | 2,990 | 83 | 3,073 | 439 |
| Grant | 9 | 5,421 | 36 | 5,457 | 606 |
| Holdfast Bay | 12 | 28,943 | 94 | 29,037 | 2,420 |
| Kangaroo Island | 9 | 3,476 | 48 | 3,524 | 392 |

| Council | Number of councillors * | House of Assembly roll | Council roll | Total roll | Electors per councillor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Karoonda East Murray | 6 | 713 | 5 | 718 | 120 |
| Kimba | 7 | 712 | 81 | 793 | 113 |
| Kingston | 7 | 1,776 | 80 | 1,856 | 265 |
| Light | 10 | 10,840 | 23 | 10,863 | 1,086 |
| Lower Eyre Peninsula | 7 | 3,748 | 89 | 3,837 | 548 |
| Loxton Waikerie | 10 | 8,337 | 15 | 8,352 | 835 |
| Marion | 12 | 68,026 | 84 | 68,110 | 5,676 |
| Mid Murray | 9 | 6,660 | 73 | 6,733 | 748 |
| Mitcham | 13 | 49,573 | 60 | 49,633 | 3,818 |
| Mount Barker | 10 | 27,647 | 69 | 27,716 | 2,772 |
| Mount Gambier | 8 | 20,169 | 64 | 20,233 | 2,529 |
| Mount Remarkable | 7 | 2,088 | 45 | 2,133 | 305 |
| Murray Bridge | 9 | 15,295 | 44 | 15,339 | 1,704 |
| Naracoorte Lucindale | 10 | 5,901 | 116 | 6,017 | 602 |
| Northern Areas | 9 | 3,383 | 53 | 3,436 | 382 |
| Norwood Payneham & St Peters | 13 | 26,380 | 71 | 26,451 | 2,035 |
| Onkaparinga | 12 | 130,970 | 150 | 131,120 | 10,927 |
| Orroroo Carrieton | 6 | 658 | 29 | 687 | 115 |
| Peterborough | 8 | 1,227 | 12 | 1,239 | 155 |
| Playford | 15 | 66,902 | 64 | 66,966 | 4,464 |
| Port Adelaide Enfield | 17 | 88,877 | 188 | 89,065 | 5,239 |
| Port Augusta | 9 | 9,562 | 4 | 9,566 | 1,063 |
| Port Lincoln | 9 | 10,910 | 23 | 10,933 | 1,215 |
| Port Pirie | 9 | 13,084 | 16 | 13,100 | 1,456 |

| Council | Number of councillors * | House of Assembly roll | Council roll | Total roll | Electors per councillor |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prospect | 8 | 15,267 | 29 | 15,296 | 1,912 |
| Renmark Paringa | 8 | 6,691 | 191 | 6,882 | 860 |
| Robe | 6 | 1,181 | 189 | 1,370 | 228 |
| Salisbury | 14 | 98,123 | 64 | 98,187 | 7,013 |
| Southern Mallee | 7 | 1,307 | 7 | 1,314 | 188 |
| Streaky Bay | 8 | 1,570 | 50 | 1,620 | 203 |
| Tatiara | 9 | 4,502 | 32 | 4,534 | 504 |
| Tea Tree Gully | 12 | 74,788 | 41 | 74,829 | 6,236 |
| Tumby Bay | 6 | 2,073 | 3 | 2,076 | 346 |
| Unley | 12 | 28,062 | 79 | 28,141 | 2,345 |
| Victor Harbor | 9 | 13,103 | 182 | 13,285 | 1,476 |
| Wakefield | 9 | 4,867 | 72 | 4,939 | 549 |
| Walkerville | 8 | 5,803 | 84 | 5,887 | 736 |
| Wattle Range | 11 | 8,705 | 18 | 8,723 | 793 |
| West Torrens | 14 | 43,091 | 241 | 43,332 | 3,095 |
| Whyalla | 9 | 15,683 | 45 | 15,728 | 1,748 |
| Wudinna | 7 | 816 | 2 | 818 | 117 |
| Yankalilla | 9 | 4,287 | 148 | 4,435 | 493 |
| Yorke Peninsula | 11 | 8,903 | 69 | 8,972 | 816 |
|  | 637 | 1,261,237 | 23,844 | 1,285,081 | 2,017 |

*Number of councillors does not include elected mayors.

## Annexure 2

**Daily returns compared to 2014 council elections**

| | Received | Roll Total | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SA total** | 398215 | 1,208,858 | 32.94% |



**Total envelopes received**

2018: 17585, 76617, 132250, 184700, 221150, 265386, 302104, 326298, 360910, 398215

2014: 49781, 90824, 134450, 173493, 209552, 249047, 279722, 303442, 327639, 356136

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
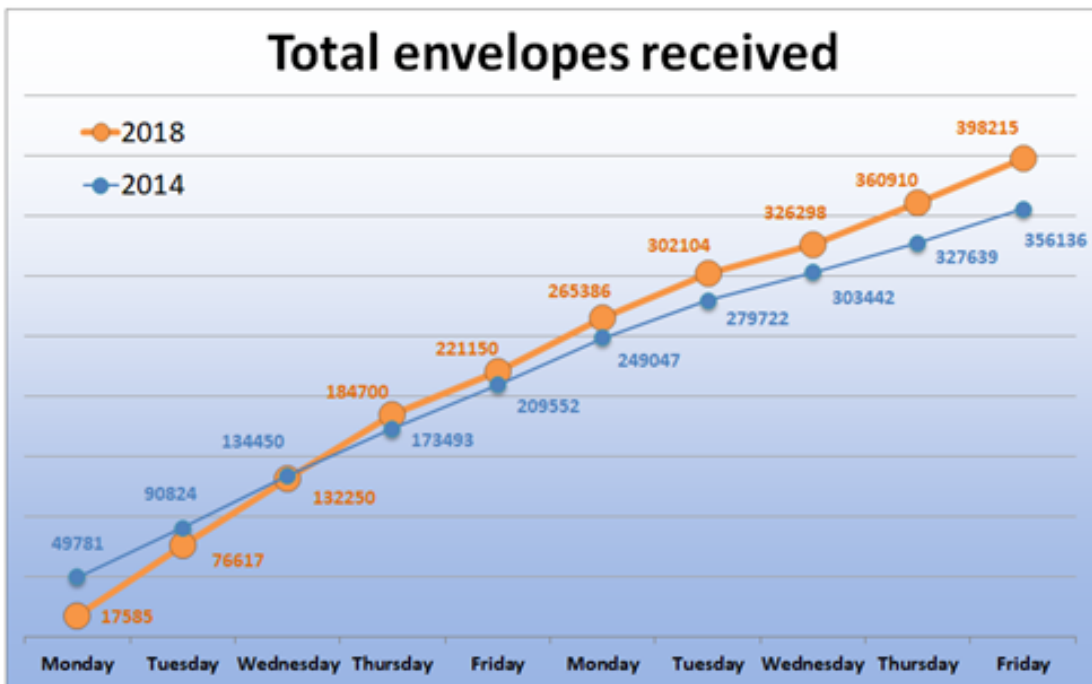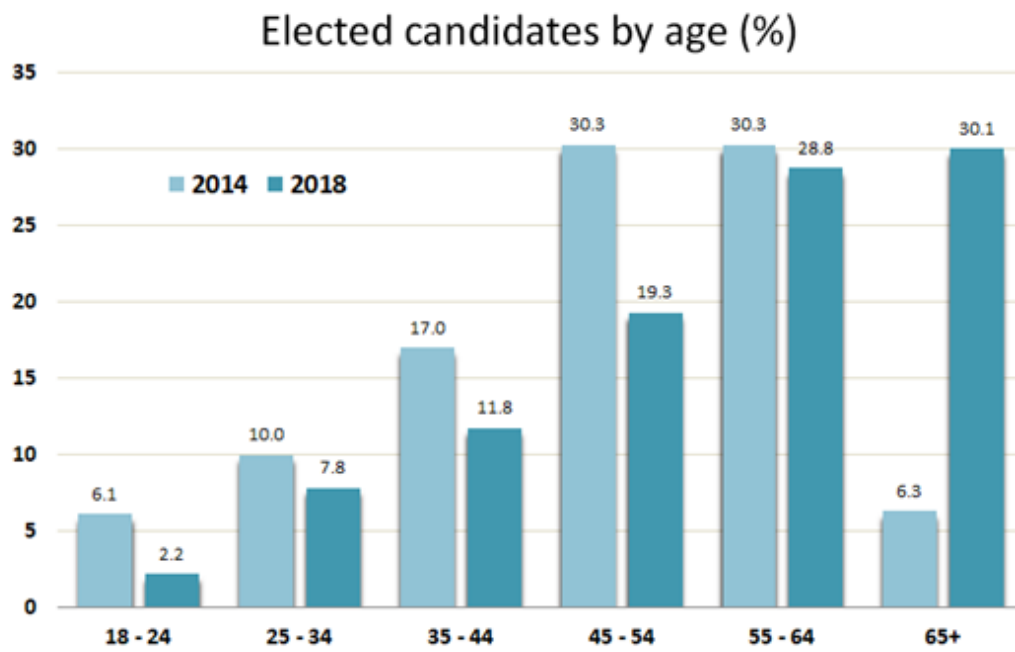
*Note : these figures represent the total numbers of all declarations envelopes received and processed.*

Source: Data included in annexures 2 – 7. (17)
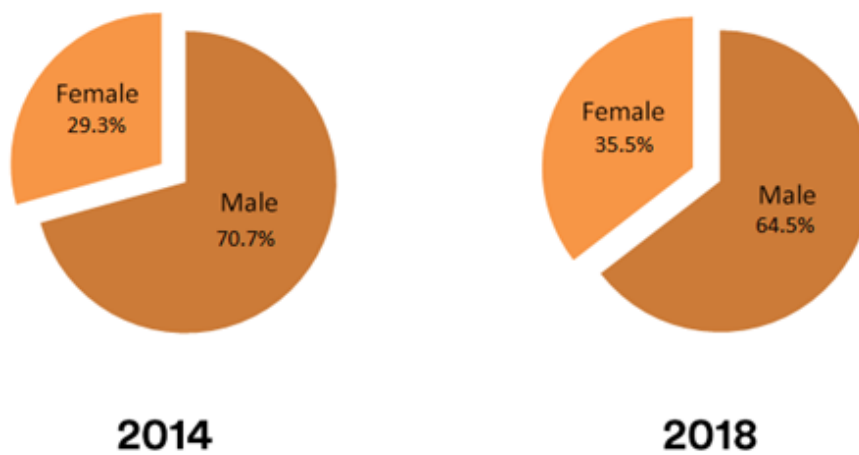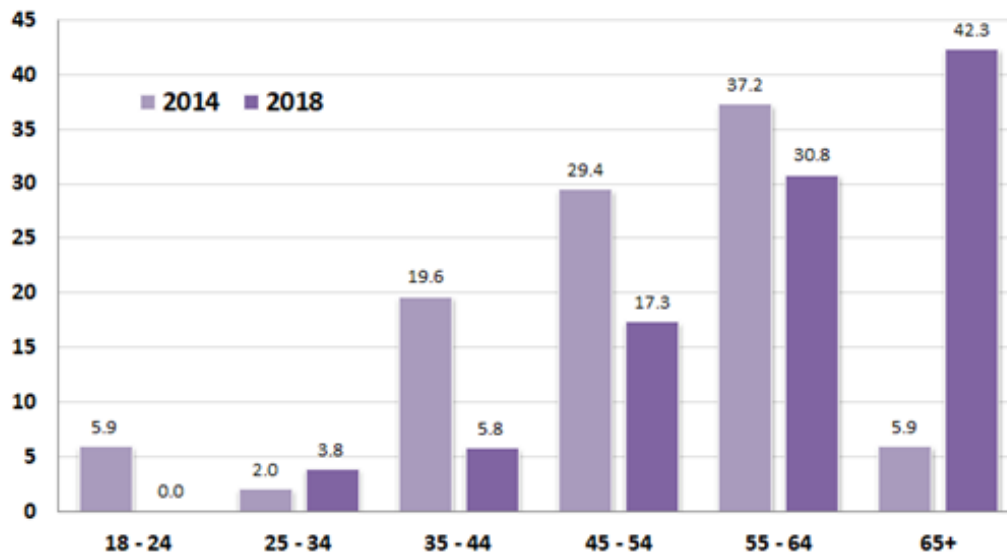
## Turnout by council (%)

| Council | Turnout (%) |
|---|---|
| ADELAIDE | 30.6 |
| ADELAIDE HILLS | 31.4 |
| ADELAIDE PLAINS | 34.2 |
| ALEXANDRINA | 42.6 |
| BAROSSA | 34.4 |
| BARUNGA WEST | 56.5 |
| BERRI BARMERA | 43.9 |
| BURNSIDE | 30.5 |
| CAMPBELLTOWN | 31.2 |
| CHARLES STURT | 29.4 |
| CLARE & GILBERT VALLEYS | 44.1 |
| CLEVE | 65.6 |
| COOBER PEDY | 56.5 |
| COORONG | 61.0 |
| COPPER COAST | 48.4 |
| ELLISTON | 70.6 |
| FLINDERS RANGES | 60.4 |
| GAWLER | 28.7 |
| GOYDER | 55.6 |
| GRANT | 43.7 |
| HOLDFAST BAY | 34.3 |
| KANGAROO ISLAND | 66.6 |
| KAROONDA EAST MURRAY | 64.3 |
| KIMBA | 81.0 |
| KINGSTON | 65.1 |
| LIGHT | 29.9 |
| LOXTON WAIKERIE | 59.7 |
| MARION | 25.5 |
| MID MURRAY | 44.7 |
| MITCHAM | 33.1 |
| MOUNT BARKER | 31.2 |
| MOUNT GAMBIER | 42.9 |
| MOUNT REMARKABLE | 62.6 |
| MURRAY BRIDGE | 34.8 |
| NARACOORTE LUCINDALE | 55.8 |
| NORTHERN AREAS | 50.8 |
| NORWOOD PAYNEHAM & ST PETERS | 30.8 |
| ONKAPARINGA | 26.3 |
| ORROROO CARRIETON | 63.4 |
| PETERBOROUGH | 62.3 |
| PLAYFORD | 25.7 |
| PORT ADELAIDE ENFIELD | 29.7 |
| PORT AUGUSTA | 48.8 |
| PORT LINCOLN | 43.8 |
| PORT PIRIE | 48.4 |
| PROSPECT | 32.6 |
| RENMARK PARINGA | 51.9 |
| ROBE | 68.1 |
| SALISBURY | 27.8 |
| SOUTHERN MALLEE | 68.4 |
| STREAKY BAY | 52.2 |
| TATIARA | 46.9 |
| TEA TREE GULLY | 26.6 |
| TUMBY BAY | 67.5 |
| UNLEY | 31.4 |
| VICTOR HARBOR | 52.1 |
| WAKEFIELD | 46.6 |
| WALKERVILLE | 33.7 |
| WEST TORRENS | 33.5 |
| WHYALLA | 48.4 |
| YANKALILLA | 49.4 |
| YORKE PENINSULA | 52.9 |

**Annexure 4**

## Elected candidates by age (%)
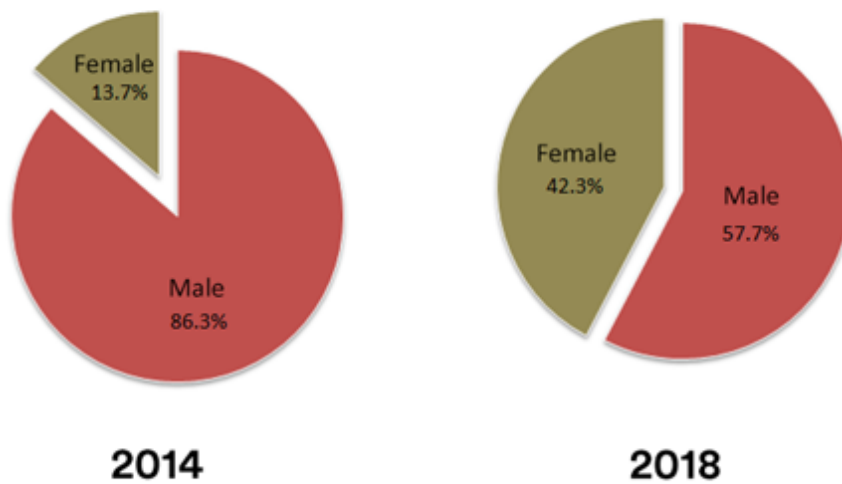


**Annexure 5**

## Elected candidates by gender
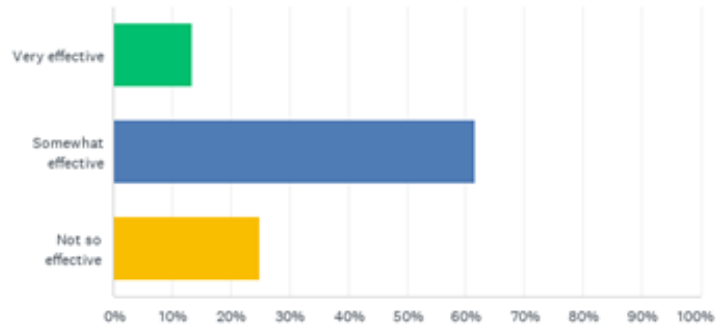


2014

2018

## Elected mayors by age (%)

## Elected mayors by gender



2014

2018

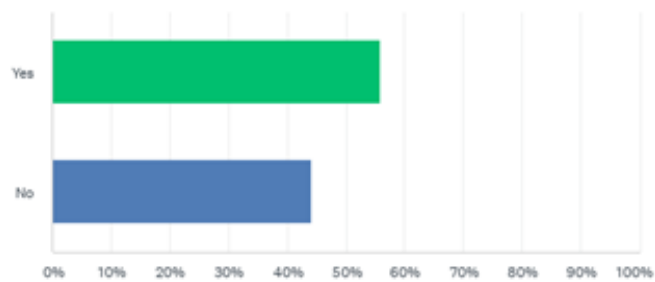## Q2 How effective do you think South Australia's current system for Local Government elections is?



## Q4 Do you think compulsory voting would elevate the standing of Local Government in South Australia?



## Q5 Do you think there should be compulsory voting in local government elections?